



# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Los Angeles Region



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Secretary for  
Environmental  
Protection

Over 51 Years Serving Coastal Los Angeles and Ventura Counties  
Recipient of the 2001 *Environmental Leadership Award* from Keep California Beautiful

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April 26, 2004

Interested Parties

Subject: Hansen Dam – Removal of Debris

On November 21, 2003, the Regional Water Board's Executive Officer issued an "After the Fact" 401 Certification to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (hereinafter "Corps"). The purpose of this Certification was to address debris that had been improperly placed in and near two lakes that are within the Hansen Dam Recreation Area, which is leased by the Corps to the City of Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Department. Subsequent to the issuance of that document, Regional Board staff met with Corps personnel several times and participated in a field survey at the Hansen Dam lakes to verify the area impacted by the debris. In response to the directives contained in the Certification issued to the Corps, and following the meetings with the Corps, a proposal from the Corps was submitted to the Regional Board which addresses their intentions regarding the removal of the debris.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Certification, this notice is provided to solicit comments on the mitigation plan provided by the Corps. A copy of the mitigation plan is available, upon request, for review at the offices of the Regional Board. A summary of the Corps proposal is provided below. Comments will be accepted until May 14, 2004. Please forward comments to the following address:

Executive Officer  
California Regional Water Board - Los Angeles Region  
320 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

The Corps proposal for mitigation will be addressed through the issuance of a revised Certification. A draft of this revised Certification will be prepared and publically noticed and the Regional Board will place this matter on the agenda for the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

The mitigation proposed by the Corps is based on a revised impact acreage which has been field verified by Regional Board staff. The actual impact acreage is 0.8 acres (please note that the acreage originally identified as impacted in the Certification used the acreage for the entire lake system as a placeholder and was not based on the actual area of impact).

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The Corps has committed to the removal of debris to the maximum extent practicable from the two lakes at Hansen Dam known as the Large Lower Lake and the Small Lower Lake. This removal will be accomplished following review and approval of the plan presented to the Regional Board. The Hansen Dam lakes represent a valuable and unique habitat in this region for bird nesting. The Corps has scheduled debris removal to occur this Fall to avoid bird nesting season. Debris removal is planned to be completed by November 30<sup>th</sup>. Following debris removal, the areas will be graded and restored a more natural configuration.

The current steeply inclined slopes at the Small Lower Lake will be reduced to a 3:1 grade and will incorporate a bench near the shoreline to promote access. The shoreline will be revegetated with native plants.

The Large Lower Lake will be subject to similar actions although there is no steep slope requiring re-grading. The shoreline along the Large Lower lake is already well vegetated and serves as a rich habitat for a diversity of waterfowl which I observed during my field verification.

The actual area of impact is very small in terms of acreage. Accordingly, a mitigation ratio of 3:1 will only produce a small potential mitigation project (2.4 acres). As alternative mitigation, the Corps proposes to conduct three distinct actions within the Hansen Dam Recreation Area. First, removal of non-native plants will occur along the shoreline of the Large and Small Lower Lake. Consistent with the Certification, re-vegetated areas will be monitored for a period of five years to ensure that the mitigation is successful. Second, field observations noted the presence of a considerable amount of trash that has found its way to the Large Lower Lake's shoreline. The Corps, as part of their mitigation, will remove this trash and exotic non-native vegetation along the lake's shoreline. Third, field observations noted an area of impounded stagnant water, which should be addressed. As another element of their mitigation, the Corps will restore drainage and revegetate this area located near the recreational pool complex.

Completion of this remediation plan will result in removal of nearly all of the debris deposited at the two lakes. Regional Board staff will be present during Corps removal and remediation operations to ensure that the plan is properly and fully implemented.

Dennis A. Dickerson  
Executive Officer

